Building a Culture of Assessment in Student Affairs

University of Victoria
Division of Student Affairs

Keeling Associates

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March 15, 2016
Goals

• To implement a change process that would create a culture of assessment (both learning and operational/process) across the Division of Student Affairs

• To have staff see themselves as professionals and educators contributing to the learning mission of the institution

• To implement professional standards into program assessment and development
• Assessment of Assessment conducted by an external consultant (Keeling and Associates)
• Operational and process assessment is common but learning assessment is an area of growth.
• Skill building needed in
  (a) identifying learning activities
  (b) writing outcomes and
  (c) developing rubrics
Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

• Founded in 1979
• Consortium of 42 member organizations
• CAS Board of Directors comprised of representatives from member associations
• Consensus-oriented, collaborative approach
• 45 standards and self-assessment guides (SAGs)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students &amp; Their Environments</th>
<th>Diversity &amp; Multiculturalism</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The whole student is shaped by environments that provide learning opportunities reflective of society and diversity, with students having ultimate responsibility for learning.</td>
<td>Institutions embracing diversity and eliminating barriers with justice and respect for differences, binding individuals to community.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization, Leadership, &amp; Human Resources</th>
<th>Health Engendering Environments</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of leaders possessing sound preparation is essential, with success directly correlated to clarity of mission.</td>
<td>Education prospers in benevolent environments that provide students with appropriate challenge and necessary support.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Ethical Considerations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Educators exhibit impeccable ethical behavior in professional and personal life.</td>
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## The General Standards

1. Mission
2. Program
3. Organization and Leadership
4. Human Resources
5. Ethics
6. Law, Policy and Governance
7. Diversity, Equity, and Access
8. Institutional and External Relations
9. Financial Resources
10. Technology
11. Facilities and Equipment
12. Assessment
General & Specialty Standards

General Standards
- Common across all functional areas

Specialty Standards
- Address issues specific to the functional area

- Programs & services must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their mission.

- The primary mission of career services is to assist students and other designated clients through all phases of their career development.
Learning and Development Outcome Domains and Dimensions

- Six Student Learning & Development Outcome Domains are a part of the CAS General Standards

- Stated expectation in the CAS General Standards that all functional area programs must place emphasis on identifying relevant learning outcomes and assessing their achievement by students
Learning and Development Outcome Domains and Dimensions

- **Knowledge acquisition, integration, construction, and application**
  - Dimensions: understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, and experiences; constructing knowledge; and relating knowledge to daily life

- **Cognitive complexity**
  - Dimensions: critical thinking; reflective thinking; effective reasoning; and creativity

- **Intrapersonal development**
  - Dimensions: realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics and integrity; and spiritual awareness
Learning and Development Outcome Domains and Dimensions

- Interpersonal competence
  - Dimensions: meaningful relationships; interdependence; collaboration; and effective leadership

- Humanitarianism and civic engagement
  - Dimensions: understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences; social responsibility; global perspective; and sense of civic responsibility

- Practical competence
  - Dimensions: pursuing goals; communicating effectively; technical competence; managing personal affairs; managing career development; demonstrating professionalism; maintaining health and wellness; and living a purposeful and satisfying life
Fundamental Questions of an Assessment

Student Learning and Development Outcomes

- What is the effect of our work on students?
- How are they different as a result of interacting with our programs and services?
- How do we know?
- How do we demonstrate their learning?
- What and how do we measure?

Program Evaluation

- Is the program or service functioning effectively to achieve its mission?
- What evidence is available to support the determination?
  - Learning and development outcomes are part of this evidence
- How is evidence used to make program decisions?
Applications for CAS Standards

- Design new programs and services
- Focus time, energy, and resources
- Devise staff development
- Guide strategic planning
- Develop learning and development outcomes
- Measure program and service effectiveness
Learning Assessment Pathway

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<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Launch and Learning</td>
<td>Secure and Use</td>
<td>Strengthen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-12 months; Year 1</td>
<td>12 months; Year 2</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Years 4-X</td>
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</table>
Institution and Division understand and embrace learning as a core function, challenge, and identity

Learning appears prominently in vision and mission statements

Learning is a priority in strategic plan

Learning and assessment of learning accepted as a continuing, ongoing, Division-wide responsibility

Structures created to support, provide leadership/guidance, and energize both learning and assessment of learning—CAS Steering Committee

Central support for assessment of learning put in place

Specifications for annual reports for departments and Division include learning goals/outcomes and learning assessment data
Step 1: Preparation [2]
2014/2015

- CAS Standards and learning and development outcomes adopted as framework for assessment.
- Division-wide student learning domains affirmed—aligned with University learning outcomes and consistent with CAS learning and development outcomes.
- Professional development provided to prepare and support leadership and staff in all departments/units in developing derivative departmental student learning goals/outcomes; professional development should be comprehensive and curricular.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>CAS SLO</th>
<th>U Vic Outcomes</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>I, III, IV, V</td>
<td>Understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, experiences; constructing knowledge; relating knowledge to daily life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive Complexity</td>
<td>II, V, VI, X</td>
<td>Critical thinking, reflective thinking, effective reasoning, creativity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal Development</td>
<td>X, XI</td>
<td>Realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics and integrity; spiritual awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Competence</td>
<td>VII, VIII, IX</td>
<td>Meaningful relationships, interdependence, collaboration, effective leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanitarianism and Civic</td>
<td>VII, VIII, IX, X</td>
<td>Understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences, global perspective, social responsibility, civic responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical Competence</td>
<td>III, VI, X, XI</td>
<td>Pursuing goals, communicating effectively, technological competence, managing personal affairs, managing career, professionalism, health and wellness, purposeful and satisfying life</td>
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</table>
Each department selected and implemented *learning assessment* for at least one, but not more than two, initial programs or activities.

Each department *learned* about both *learning* and *assessment* by working “on the ground” with a defined *learning outcome* and *assessment plan*.

Diversity of experience ensued; outcomes varied.

Departments reported results of their *learning assessment* projects.

Peers and colleagues reviewed results—but also assumptions, learning goals, methods.

Departments shared what they learned through this process.
Learning In Step 2

- It’s not that easy.
- Resources specifically devoted to assessment are small; defining and assessing learning outcomes is not an assigned portion of job responsibilities or time.
- Some assessment projects fail; some stumble along; some soar. We learn from all of them.
- Variations in levels of experience, preparation, capacity, and enthusiasm among staff—and variations in attitudes and support from their colleagues and supervisors.
- Hard to really get down to activity level; higher order outcomes are seductive but assessments of them are rarely convincing.
- Keeping learning and process/operations assessments clearly differentiated (and separated during implementation) is confusing and difficult.
- Indirect and inferential measures of learning are much easier than direct ones.
Step 3: Secure and Use 2016/2017

The goals of Phase 3 are to (1) further strengthen the capacity of Student Affairs leadership and staff to conduct increasingly comprehensive and sophisticated assessments of learning and operational effectiveness, (2) build greater assessment capacity at deeper levels of staff in each department and unit through application of a “train-the-trainer” professional development model, and (3) develop standards for use in units and functional areas that are not currently represented in the CAS Standards.

The development and assessment of student learning outcomes in Student Affairs will be strengthened through a regular process of collaborative, constructive review and feedback.
For more information

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For More Information

• Visit www.cas.edu

• CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education (9th edition)

• Self-Assessment Guides
  – Also available through CAS website
  – Available through Campus Labs Program Review

• CAS Statements (available on website)
  – Characteristics of Individual Excellence
  – CAS Statement of Shared Ethical Principles

• CAS Resource Center at http://www.cas.edu/resources.asp

• Frameworks for Assessing Learning and Developmental Outcomes (FALDOS) (2006)
Keeling Associates
Change for Learning

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